tion suspects that you are the author. . . . Of course I denied this rumor, but something might happen. . . ."

I interrupted him. "Please tell Fetisov that the stuff came from me, and everybody in Ekaterinoslav and St. Petersburg knows that. Then I will be perfectly safe. They will be afraid of me."

However, I was not entirely sure of my position. Very soon I had a chance to test it. After the explosion, the prisoners had been forbidden to go near the windows and the guards in the courtyard were instructed to shoot at anyone they could see behind the bars. The window in the tower was so low that it was hard to move about the room without coming into view of the guards. One day Misha carelessly approached it. The guard noticed him and reported to Belokos, who rushed into our chamber. "To the dungeon!" he shouted. "Who stood at the window?"

I answered, "I did."

Belokos opened his mouth but stopped short. "You did not," he said after a brief silence.

"I did," I insisted. "Ask the guard."

He looked at me with suspicion. Then he said firmly, "Why should I? I know your tricks." And he slammed the door behind him furiously.

I was immune. Belokos avoided our tower. The guards in the courtyard no longer harassed us.

FACING THE GALLOWS

Along with gathering material on the mistreatment of prisoners, I kept up a correspondence with inmates about their cases and wrote their applications to the courts and other legal papers. Most of my clients were facing the gallows, some for revolutionary activity in 1905 and armed resistance at the time of their arrest; others, like Nikolai and Yegerev, under false accusations. The sentence depended less on the evidence presented by the prosecuting attorney than on the president of the military court. Justice was reduced to a sordid gamble. A few knew in advance that they would be hanged and were not interested in the pre-trial procedure; others tried to defend themselves but were lost in the jungle of legal terms and references to the paragraphs of the Penal Code.

Legal murder—execution of innocent people—had become a common practice under Stolypin and impressed nobody. A military judge or prosecutor did not attract public attention by the number of death sentences he imposed in a single session. Only carefully staged mass trials hit the headlines.